

**Rejoice!**

**The Liturgical color today is Rose**

**So even in the midst of Lent we rejoice for Jesus is near.**

**Friday, I had a memorial service for Mataya, a twenty year old who took her own life. There are many kinds of blindness.**

**Today's Gospel is all about blindness.**

**There are many kinds of blindness.**

**One kind is depression.**

**Things can become so dark that we cannot see any way ahead of us.**

**The darkness can become overpowering**

**Jesus came that we might see and find our way along the road of life.**

**Mental illness is a blindness too often ignored, and not well enough funded in our society.**

**Our prisons are filled with the mentally ill. We lock them in, throw away the key and forget about them.**

**Surely criminal justice reform is long overdue.**

**Mataya never harmed anyone else, but eventually he surrendered to the intolerable darkness and harmed herself.**

**She was the granddaughter of the first couple I married in Hartington Nebraska in 1959.**

**And so we pray:**

**God grant rest and peace to Mataya.**

**And grant release from darkness**

**to so many who dwell in the darkness of depression.**

**Amen.**

**Â**